



N. C. CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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May 7, 2008

The Honorable Steve Troxler
Commissioner

N. C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
1001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1001

Dear Commissioner Troxler:

I understand the final report from the Program Evaluation Division has not been released yet, but I have seen enough of the draft reports to warrant considerable concerns from the members and those represented by the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association. We understand the Program Evaluation Division is suggesting a transfer of the Research Station Divisions from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina with an allocation to North Carolina State University. We also understand that in the transfer process, the Program Evaluation Division has suggested that several of the research stations be closed.

The 3,000 members of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Association and the more than 20,000 producers we represent are very concerned that this decision has not been properly thought out and vetted with the cattle community. Most of the research stations targeted for closure have programs that are vital to livestock in general but beef cattle in particular.

I also want to point out that I serve on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Cattlemen's Foundation, which has spent more than \$100,000 on beef cattle research since its conception, all of which has been conducted on the state's research stations.

I am also currently serving as the Immediate Past President of the North Carolina Angus Association, which has raised over \$100,000 dollars in one year (our initial goal was \$15,000 in two years), for an endowment to fund the study of beef cattle genetic efficiency at the Upper Piedmont Research Station. This project has also been supported by the American Angus Association with a commitment of \$170,000 over five years and is nationally recognized for its unique focus and mission.

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National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

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What really concerns me are the negative impact this whole transfer has created and what problems it will cause for future fund-raising activities. Without support, both political and financial, from the state's producers, the funding of future research on these stations is at risk.

All in all, the cattle producers of North Carolina are suspicious about this whole process. We have been well served in the past with NCDA & CS managing the research stations and until our concerns are properly addressed, we recommend no changes in the management.

I sincerely offer any support you deem necessary to properly address the concerns of the beef cattle community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "J. F. Lancaster". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

J. F. Lancaster
President

JFL:kab